

Appendix A

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Public involvement in development of the Forest Plan revision began in October 1994 with a letter sent to over 2,000 members of the public asking for input to help identify the need to change the Forest Plan. Recipients were asked to identify significant changes in laws, resource conditions and public desires that might warrant making changes to the Daniel Boone Forest Plan.

The need for changes to the Forest Plan was also discussed in April 1995 at a Forest Service interest group meeting attended by representatives from many of the agencies and organizations that have an interest in the management of the Daniel Boone National Forest.

In accordance with 36 CFR 219.6, owners of lands intermingled with or dependent for access upon Daniel Boone National Forest System lands were notified of Forest planning activities along with the general public through notices in the Federal Register, local newspapers, radio/television announcements, and the planning newsletter, *The Boone Planner*, as outlined in the Summary of Public Involvement Activities listed below.

The first issue of the Forest's planning newsletter, *The Boone Planner*, was distributed in June 1996. The purpose of *The Boone Planner* was to introduce interested parties to the forest planning process and keep them updated as the revision process progressed. It would be published periodically throughout the revision of the Forest Plan. Each issue of the newsletter was mailed to those on the forest planning mailing list, which included media; Congressional contacts; local, state, and federal agency representatives; county officials; university personnel; and individuals who had commented or expressed interest in management of the Daniel Boone National Forest. *The Boone Planner* was also placed in Forest Service offices on the National Forest.

The official beginning to the revision of the Daniel Boone Forest Plan began with the publication in the Federal Register of a Notice of Intent to prepare an environmental impact statement on July 21, 1996. A news release was also distributed to area media. This began a 90-day scoping comment period for the public to comment on the need to revise the Forest Plan and the important issues associated with that need. The Notice of Intent described preliminary issues that had been developed from the experience of implementing the Plan for the past 10 years. The preliminary issues included:

- What actions and land allocations are necessary to insure the biological diversity and sustainability of ecosystems, considering the plant, animal and human interactions?
- What combination of land allocation, forest regulations, facilities and services should the national forest furnish to assure public recreation opportunities that provide a minimum of conflict between users and protection of natural resources?
- What road and trail system is needed on the forest and how should it be managed?
- What should be the balance of specially designated areas, such as wilderness, zoological and botanical areas, which are needed to conserve unique forest characteristics?
- Should the Daniel Boone make land allocations and take action to maintain or improve opportunities for hunting and fishing experiences and enjoyment of wildlife?

- What role should timber harvesting play in ecosystem management, and in contributing to meet the demand for wood fiber by the American public? What economic considerations should be applied?
- What additional management options, if any, should be used for the extraction of “miscellaneous forest products” such as moss and other plant material?
- How should the Daniel Boone manage federally owned minerals?

In conjunction with the scoping comment period, a series of open house meetings were held at locations on and off the Forest from July 15, 1996 to August 15, 1996, to provide information on the Forest Plan revision process, the need for a revision and the components of the current Plan that were proposed to change. Members of the core planning team, district rangers, and staff were on hand to answer questions about the Plan revision. The meetings were held at the Laurel County Courthouse in London, KY; McKee City Hall in McKee, KY; Carl D. Perkins Community Center in Morehead, KY; Natural Bridge State Resort Park in Slade, KY; Big Creek Volunteer Fire Department in Big Creek, KY; Whitley City Middle School Cafeteria in Whitley City, KY; Rural Economic Development Center in Somerset, KY; Fayette County Extension Office in Lexington, KY; and Ellis Cooperative Extension Building in Burlington, KY. Total attendance for the ten open houses was approximately 600 people.

By the end of the scoping comment period the Forest had received over 5,000 comments from the public. A content analysis was done to code each comment based on the identified issue. This content analysis was the basis for the final list of 14 significant issues that needed to be addressed in the revision of the Forest Plan.

One of the issues that were identified in many of the scoping comments was the management and use of off-highway vehicles (OHVs) on the Daniel Boone. This was one of the reasons that the Forest Supervisor made the decision to begin work on a Forest Plan amendment, to be completed before the revision of the Forest Plan, which would change management direction pertaining to OHVs. This effort entailed its own set of public involvement initiatives and slowed progress on the Forest Plan revision.

In 1997, the Forest Service initiated another Forest Plan amendment to improve management for a number of species with special habitat needs, and as a response to recent court decisions. This amendment effort was accompanied by its own public involvement strategies.

In August 1998, a workshop was held for citizens to learn more about the national forest planning process and to provide input on alternative management themes that had been developed by the planning team as part of the response to the significant issues. The attendees also provided feedback on what uses the forest should provide and where those uses should occur. The workshop was held at the Carl Perkins Conference Center at Eastern Kentucky University in Richmond, KY. Eighty-six people attended the workshop. Mailings were used to also solicit input from those who could not attend the workshop. Input received at the workshop, from those not attending the workshop, and the original scoping comments was used to modify the alternative management themes and to add new themes.

Beginning in September 2001, the Forest Service began offering an opportunity for members of the public to attend a monthly planning team meeting as a means of learning more about the planning process. Core planning team members provided progress reports and took questions from the attendees.

About this same time the Daniel Boone's forest planning web site was expanded to include more information and documents pertaining to the work of revising the Forest Plan.

A second series of forest planning workshops was held for the public in November and December 2001. The objectives of this set of workshops were to provide participants information about the planning process for revising the Forest Plan and to provide an opportunity for input into the development of management alternatives. Attendees were asked to identify areas of the forest they would recommend be managed to emphasize particular conditions. These workshops were held at Carl Perkins Community Center in Morehead, KY; Clark County Extension Educational Facility in Winchester, KY; Boone County Ellis Extension Center in Burlington, KY; Redbird Ranger District Office in Big Creek, KY; London Community Center in London, KY; Holiday Inn Hurstbourne Parkway in Louisville, KY; and Somerset Community College McCreary Center in Whitley City, KY. Attendance at the workshops totaled 378 and consisted of a wide range of interests. The *Boone Planner* and forest planning web site were used to also seek input from those who could not attend a workshop.

The April 2002 *Boone Planner* recapped the public meetings in the fall and summarized public comments that were received. The public was invited to view these collected comments on the Forest Plan Revision web site and hard copies were available upon request.

In addition to the specific public involvement efforts mentioned previously, the Forest Service has utilized news releases at all of the key phases, including the publication of the Notice of Intent, and to announce each of the public meetings and workshops. Members of the planning team and the Forest Management Team have also made themselves available to speak about the revision process at meetings of various special interest groups.

Several state and federal agencies participated at relevant steps in the revision process (e.g. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, Kentucky Division of Water, and Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission).

Public participation continued with the release of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and the Proposed Revised Forest Plan. The release of the documents to the public was heralded with a press conference and was formally announced with the publication of a Notice of Availability (NOA) in the Federal Register on May 16, 2003. Publication of the NOA initiated a 90-day comment period.

Public outreach efforts during the 90-day comment period included nine open houses at locations around the national forest and in outlying urban centers, including Lexington, Louisville, and the northern Kentucky/Cincinnati area. The open houses featured information stations where members of the planning team were available to answer questions and explain the planning process and documents.

The public commented on the documents in many different ways. All of the comments were organized and summarized by the Forest Service Content Analysis Team in Salt Lake City. Appendix I is a detailed account of this process, as well as a summary of the public comments, public concerns, and the Forest Service response to these concerns.



Waterfall on Stearns Ranger District